

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: USE OF COTONOU/GAO ROUTE

ROME FOR SKILES PASS OSRO

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF MALI HAS INDICATED NEED FOR ADDITIONAL
DONATED STOCKS IN GAO REGION OF MALI FOR CROP YEAR 1974/75.
US INTENDS TO ASSIST GOM MEET THIS NEED BY SHIPPING PORTION
OF REQUIRED STOCKS OVER COTONOU/PAKOU/NIAMEY/GAO RAIL AND
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ROAD ROUTE. IN MAKING DECISION TO SHIP VIA THIS ROUTE,

FOLLOWING FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED:

A. FORWARDING MOPTI STOCKS TO VI REGION: MOST DONATED STOCKS CURRENTLY STORED IN MOPTI (APPROXIMATELY 12,000) ARE DESTIN FOR GOUNDAM, TIMBUKTU AND GAO. PAST GOM DIFFICULT SEVARE-GAO ROUTE HAVE CONSISTANTLY FALLEN SHORT OF GOM'S PROFESSED CAPABILITY. MULTI-DONOR MISSION CONCLUDED THIS YEAR THAT GOM HAS SUFFICIENT TRUCKS TO ACCOMPLISH VI REGION PRE-POSITIONING OBJECTIVES BUT GOM CURRENT SIPHONING-OFF OF ITS LOGISTICAL CAPABILITY TO REINFORCE MALI INTERESTS IN UPPER VOLTA BORDER WILL UNDOUBTEDLY RESULT IN PRE-POSITION SHORTFALLS ASSUMING CURRENT DONOR EFFORTS TO ASSIST GOM MOVE MOPTI STOCKS TO

VI REGION ARE SUCCESSFUL, MAIN EMPHASIS WILL HAVE TO BE DIRECTED TO BUILD-UP OF STOCKS IN GOUNDAM AND TIMBUKTU SINCE ACCESS TO THESE AREAS FROM MOPTI IS CUT-OFF EARLY IN JULY; WHEREAS, FOOD DELIVERIES TO GAO FROM NIGER CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED YEAR ROUND.

B. ABIDJAN-GAO SHIPMENTS: ATTEMPTS TO SHIP STOCKS TO GAO OVER THIS ROUTE WILL BE SUBJECT TO CONSTRAINTS LISTED IN A. ABOVE AND CONSEQUENTLY RESULT IN INCREASE OF STOCK ACCUMULATION IN MOPTI.

C. ABIDJAN/OUAGADOUGOU/NIAMEY/GAO POSSIBILITY: UPPER VOLTA/MALI CURRENT TENSIONS LEAVE LITTLE ASSURANCE THAT DONATED GRAIN STOCKS DESTINED FOR MALI WOULD TRANSIT UPPER VOLTA INTACT. SAME PROBLEM ARISES WITH RESPECT TO LOME/OUAGADOUGOU/GAO SHIPMENT ROUTE.

D. GOVERNMENT OF MALI/GOVERNMENT OF NIGER COMMUNICATIONS: PROBLEMS AROSE OVER NIGER GRAINS TRANS-SHIPMENT TO GAO IN 1974. SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS WERE RELATED TO MALI'S RELUCTANCE TO HAVE GAO SUPPLIED FROM NIAMEY; OTHERS TO NIGER'S CONCERN TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT DONOR STOCKS MEET OWN REQUIREMENTS. DUE IN LARGE PART TO STRENUOUS EFFORTS OF U.S. EMBASSIES IN NIAMEY AND BAMAKO, THESE ISSUES WERE RESOLVED AND APPROXIMATELY 500 MT OF SORGHUM WAS DELIVERED TO GAO VIA NIAMEY DURING 1974 SOUDURE. HOPE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FULLY, NEED FOR USG DEMARCHE TO RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS WILL NOT EXIST THIS YEAR SINCE GOM NOW CONCURS ON USE OF ROUTE (SEE BAMAKO 0583) AND GON'S PRESENT NEED FOR IMPORT-ED DONATED STOCKS NOT OF 1974 DIMENSIONS. NEVERTHELESS, WE MAY HAVE TO REQUEST EMBASSY/USAID INTERVENTION IF TRANS-SHIPMENT DIFFICULTIES ARE ENCOUNTERED. (NOTE: AID/W HAS NOTED SUGGESTION THAT NEGOTIATIONS BE OPENED BETWEEN GOM AND GON TO HAVE FED/NIGER GRAIN FORWARDED TO

GAO AND REPLACED BY AID FURNISHED GRAIN. WE ARE KEEPING THIS OPTION IN RESERVE AND WILL CONSIDER SHOULD CHANGING EVENTS NECESSITATE.)

E. NATIONALIZATION OF DAHOMEY COMMODITY FORWARDING AGENT TO ACTUAL EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT'S NATIONALIZATION POLICY ON COMMODITY FORWARDING IN DAHOMEY, DONORS REMAIN HOPEFUL THAT LACK OF SERIOUS SHIPPING DISCONTINUITIES DUE NATIONALIZATION OVER PAST THREE MONTHS IN COTONOU/NIAMEY ROUTE SUGGESTS SHIPMENTS WILL CONTINUE UNAFFECTED. SHOULD DIFFICULTIES DEVELOP, HOWEVER, EMBASSY/COTONOU IS PREPARED SEEK QUICK RESOLUTION THROUGH APPROPRIATE DEMARCHE.

F. CAPACITY OF COTONOU PORT: OFF-LOADING CAPABILITY AND COVERED STORAGE CAPACITY (15,000 MT) CONSIDERED ADEQUATE TO MEET FORESEEN GRAIN SHIPMENTS IF PRESENT SCHEDULES ARE ADHERED TO. NEWLY CONSTRUCTED SILO/BAGGING FACILITY IN PORT WILL BE FULLY OPERATIONAL BY END OF MAY ACCORDING TO OCDN DIRECTOR AND WILL ACCELERATE RATE-OF-STOCK MOVEMENT THROUGH PORT.

G. CAPACITY OF RAIL LINE FROM COTONOU TO PARAKOU: DURING PERIOD MAY 4, 1974-AUGUST 5, 1974, A TOTAL OF 39,330 TONS OF FOOD GRAINS WAS EVACUATED FROM COTONOU BY RAIL. THIS DAILY AVERAGE OF 437 MT WILL MOST LIKELY NOT BE ACHIEVED OVER THE SIMILAR PERIOD THIS YEAR" DUE TO DETERIORATING EQUIPMENT, NATIONALIZATION POLICIES, AND SPORADIC LABOR PROBLEMS. OUR CONJECTURE IS THAT AN AVERAGE EVACUATION RATE OF 200 MT CAN BE MAINTAINED IF DONORS COLLABORATIVELY MONITOR OCDN PERFORMANCE ON A DAILY BASIS. RECENT OCDN AGREEMENT TO SHIP FOOD GRAINS IN 25 MT TRUCKS FROM COTONOU TO NIGER WOULD SEEM TO ENSURE THAT 200 MT DAILY EVACUATION RATE FROM COTONOU LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAN BE MAINTAINED.

H. CONDITION OF LABBEZANGA/GAO ROAD: IF REPAIR WORK ON THIS ROUTE IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED TO PERMIT UNINTERRUPTED FLOW OF COMMODITIES DURING WORST WEEKS OF RAINY SEASON, EQUIPMENT MIX OF TRUCK CONVOYS WILL BE ADJUSTED TO INSURE THROUGH-SHIPMENTS AS WAS DONE DURING 1974.

I. COST FACTOR: WHEN NIGER RIVER NOT NAVIGABLE, COTONOU/NIAMEY ROUTE TO GAO REPRESENTS LEAST COSTLY OF VARIOUS DELIVERY ROUTES AVAILABLE FROM COAST.

2. IT IS CLEAR FROM ABOVE THAT UP-COMING GRAIN SHIPMENTS OVER COTONOU/GAO ROUTE WILL NOT BE PROBLEM FREE' WE

ARE CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT CAREFULLY COORDINATED USG
EFFORT WILL ENABLE US TO ATTAIN FOOD-SUPPLY OBJECTIVE.
OSRO AND WFP STAND READY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE AS REQUIRED

3. SEPTELS WILL FOLLOW ON SHIPMENT DETAILS.

DECONTROL: 4/22/76. KISSINGER

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